

Message Text

SECRET

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DRAFTED BY EA:PCHABIB:JNP

APPROVED BY P:JSISCO

S/S:MR. ORTIZ

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 098952 TOSEC 110011

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FOR SECRETARY FROM SISCO AND HABIB

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, RH

SUBJECT: RHODESIA

1. CLARK MAC GREGOR CAME TO SEE HABIB EARLY THIS MORNING. FOR SOME TIME MAC GREGOR HAS HAD A PERSONAL ACQUAINTANCE AND HAS BEEN COMMUNICATING WITH IAN SMITH. MAC GREGOR RECALLED THAT HE HAD PASSED A MESSAGE FROM SMITH TO THE WHITE HOUSE SOME TIME AGO. SMITH OFFERED TO COME TO WASHINGTON OR TO SEND OR RECEIVE A PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE, TO DISCUSS RHODESIAN PROBLEMS. ACCORDING TO MAC GREGOR, THE WHITE HOUSE DECLINED. (MAC GREGOR IMPLIED THAT HE WAS PREPARED TO BE THE PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE IF THE WHITE HOUSE WISHED.)

2. MAC GREGOR SAID HE HAD BEEN APPROACHED LAST NIGHT BY THE LOCAL RHODESIAN REPRESENTATIVE, TOWSEY. TOWSEY HAS JUST RETURNED FROM A MEETING IN ZURICH WITH THE RHODESIAN MINISTER OF DEFENSE VAN DER BYL. THE RHODESIANS ARE INTERESTED IN GETTING WORD TO THE WHITE HOUSE AND TO YOU THAT THEY ARE PREPARED TO BE QUITE FLEXIBLE. MAC GREGOR

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SAYS SMITH HAS MADE CLEAR TO HIM IN THE PAST THAT THERE IS

MUCH MORE ROOM FOR FLEXIBILITY IN THEIR POSITION THAN APPEARS ON THE SURFACE. VAN DER BYLE HAD TOLD TOWSEY THAT SMITH WAS PREPARED TO INTRODUCE A NUMBER OF BLACKS AT THE CABINET AND SUB-CABINET LEVEL AND WAS ALSO READY

FOR EVENTUAL BLACK MAJORITY CONTROL. THE UPSHOT OF ALL THIS WAS THAT THE RHODESIAN GOVERNMENT ASKED MAC GREGOR TO GET WORD TO YOU THAT THEY WOULD LIKE TO HAVE SOMEONE MEET WITH YOU WHILE YOU ARE IN AFRICA TO MAKE KNOWN THEIR POSITION.

3. HABIB TOLD MAC GREGOR THAT HE WAS NOT INVOLVED IN YOUR AFRICAN TRIP OR IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE POLICY BEING FOLLOWED BUT THAT HE WOULD PASS THE MESSAGE. HABIB FURTHER COMMENTED, HOWEVER, THAT HE DOUBTED WHETHER YOU WOULD BE READY TO MEET WITH A RHODESIAN GOVERNMENT EMISSARY IN THE COURSE OF YOUR CURRENT AFRICAN TRIP. MAC GREGOR SAID HE FULLY APPRECIATED THIS POSSIBILITY BUT THOUGHT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO GET WORD TO US ABOUT THE RHODESIAN ATTITUDE AND THEIR READINESS TO TALK. HE MADE IT CLEAR AGAIN THAT HE WAS PREPARED TO BE OF SERVICE NOW AS AN INTERMEDIARY. HABIB SAID HE DID NOT THINK THIS WAS NECESSARY BUT WOULD PASS IT ON.

4. COMMENT: WE BRING THIS TO YOUR ATTENTION WITH THE RECOMMENDATION THAT WE GENTLY TURN OFF ANY EXPECTATION ON THE PART OF THE RHODESIANS THAT YOU WOULD MEET WITH ONE OF THEIR REPRESENTATIVES WHILE YOU ARE CURRENTLY IN AFRICA. THIS WOULD ALSO APPLY TO USING MAC GREGOR AS A SUBSTITUTE. WE THINK IT WOULD NOT BE DESIRABLE TO TALK TO THE RHODESIANS UNTIL YOU HAVE FULLY EXPLORED THE BLACK AFRICAN ATTITUDES AND DETERMINE FOR YOURSELF WHAT WE CAN DO IN OUR OWN INTEREST. THE RHODESIANS ARE OBVIOUSLY QUITE WORRIED AT THIS POINT ABOUT WHAT YOU MAY BE DOING WITH THE BLACK AFRICANS AND ARE ANXIOUS TO GET THEIR VIEWS FACTORED INTO YOUR THINKING. THIS WILL EVENTUALLY BE USEFUL BUT WE SUGGEST THAT AT THIS POINT THEY BE HELD POLITELY IN ABEYANCE. I HAVE BEEN IN TOUCH WITH BRENT WHO AGREES WITH THE ABOVE. SISCO

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